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**FORCE PLANNING IN AN ERA  
OF UNCERTAINTY:  
Two MRCs  
as a Force Sizing Framework**

John F. Troxell

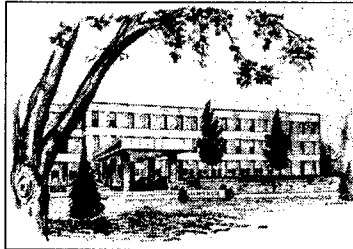
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**John F. Troxell**

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## FOREWORD

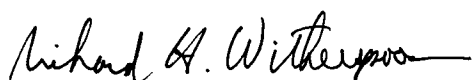
Ever since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States has been struggling with the issue of how to redefine its defense requirements. Although the Cold War competition with the former Soviet Union was perilous and extremely costly in human and material resources, this competition did represent an agreed and certain framework around which to focus U.S. defense strategy and structure U.S. armed forces. The uncertainty of the post-Cold War world has left defense planners and analysts debating the proper force planning methodology to pursue, and opened a broader debate concerning the size and purpose of the U.S. military establishment. Four separate reviews have been conducted in the past 7 years: the Base Force, the Bottom Up Review, the Commission on Roles and Missions, and, most recently, the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR). These reviews have generated only a moderate degree of consensus within the Defense Department and much less agreement in the broader national security community.

In this monograph, Colonel John F. Troxell first asserts that there is a false dichotomy being drawn between capabilities-based and threat-based force planning. He argues that post-Cold War force planning must be founded on a logical integration of threat- and capabilities-based planning methodologies. He then addresses the issue of the two Major Regional Contingency (MRC) force-sizing paradigm. After reviewing all the arguments made against that paradigm, Colonel Troxell concludes that in a world characterized by uncertainty and regional instability, in which the United States has global security interests and a unique leadership role, the two MRC framework con-

stitutes a logical scheme for organizing U.S. defense planning efforts.

That framework is also flexible enough to accommodate adjustments to the U.S. defense establishment, both today and for the immediate future. New approaches to planning scenarios and the operational concept for employing forces offer the potential for such adjustments concerning the "ways" of the strategic paradigm, while force thinning and modernization are two important categories for adjusting the affordability of the strategic "means."

At some point, changes in the international security environment will demand significantly different approaches to shaping U.S. forces. But, given the QDR's ringing endorsement of the two MRC construct, that change will be a 21st, rather than a 20th, century undertaking.



RICHARD H. WITHERSPOON

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## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR**

COLONEL JOHN F. TROXELL, a 1997 graduate of the U.S. Army War College, is the Chief of Engineer Plans and Operations with Combined Forces Command, Seoul, South Korea. A former economics instructor at the U. S. Military Academy, he earned a Bachelor's degree from the academy and a Master's degree from the Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University. He has held assignments in the Department of Army War Plans Division and as a force planner for the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy and Requirements. Colonel Troxell's operational assignments have included service with the 1st Infantry Division, 293rd Engineer Battalion, and the 43rd Engineer Battalion. He also commanded the 3rd Engineer Battalion in the 24th Infantry Division.



## **FORCE PLANNING IN AN ERA OF UNCERTAINTY: TWO MRCs AS A FORCE SIZING FRAMEWORK**

Ever since the end of the Cold War, the United States has been struggling to answer the question, "How much is enough?" concerning the size of its military establishment. This is the principal topic of the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) and the National Defense Panel's (NDP) Alternative Force Structure Assessment. Most defense analysts would claim that during the Cold War the task was relatively simple. The threat posed by the Soviet Union required the fielding of forces capable of conducting a global war, with priority placed on defending the plains of Western Europe. This situation served as an agreed scenario around which to design and develop forces and measure risks if specific force goals were not met. In addition, the Cold War force was large enough that all other military requirements, such as forces for forward presence, smaller scale interventions, and humanitarian operations could be met as lesser-included requirements. Although the threat to U.S. interests by a competing global power has vanished, the United States retains global interests in a far from benign world.

During the post-Cold War period, the sizing function that replaced the global war scenario has been the requirement to prosecute two major regional contingencies (MRCs).<sup>1</sup> This requirement evolved during the last years of the Bush administration as the rationale for the Base Force. The first act of the new Clinton administration was to study the issue, producing the Bottom Up Review (BUR) Force. The Base Force and the BUR Force were both sized

against the requirement to fight two MRCs, often incorrectly referred to as the "two MRC strategy." This "strategy" has generated a great deal of controversy. Depending on the point of view, the force structure associated with this posture is attacked for being "over-stuffed," unaffordable, or totally inadequate. The purpose of this study is to clarify the role of the two MRC requirement within the current defense program and to propose some considerations for possible adjustments to that requirement.

### **Force Planning Methodologies.**

In designing forces to protect U.S. national interests, military planners must accomplish three tasks: determine how much force is required to protect those interests, with a certain degree of assured success or a minimum degree of acceptable risk; determine how to posture that force; and, finally, convince Congress and the public that the solutions for the first two tasks are reasonably correct.<sup>2</sup> The issue of creating well-reasoned force structure requirements and convincing cost conscious politicians is not an inconsequential matter.

Two very different force planning methodologies have been utilized by military planners since the advent of the Cold War.<sup>3</sup> The easiest to conceptualize is *threat-based planning*. This methodology is preeminent when threats to U.S. interests are easily recognized and identified. The task for the planner is to postulate a reasonable scenario, or the road to war, then determine the amount of force needed to prevail in that scenario. This approach lends itself to dynamic and static modeling and provides a quantifiable rationale for the recommended force structure, and answers the question: Can the United States beat the

opponent? The logic of this approach is very compelling and greatly facilitates accomplishing the planner's third task, convincing the public and Congress.

The second major methodology is generally referred to as *capabilities-based planning*. Somewhat harder to conceptualize, analysts have proposed several variants of the same basic theme. Capabilities-based planning is most in vogue when threats to U.S. interests are multifaceted and uncertain and do not lend themselves to single-point scenario-based analysis. Instead of focusing on one or more specific opponents, the planner applies a liberal dose of military judgment to determine the appropriate mix of required military capabilities. Capabilities-based planners claim to focus on objectives rather than scenarios. Forces are sized either by a resource constraint emphasis (budget driven), or by focusing on generic military missions required to protect U.S. interests. A major problem planners have with this approach is convincing Congress that military judgment has established the proper linkage between this uncertain future environment and the specific force levels requested.<sup>4</sup> The general characteristics of these two methodologies are summarized in Figure 1.

Force-planning Methodologies				
	Purpose	Road to War	Force Determinants	Total Force Requirement
<b>Threat based</b>	Defeat the enemy	Scenarios (point estimates of likely contingencies)	Wargaming (static and dynamic modeling)	Focus sized to prevail in desired number of contingencies
<b>Capabilities based: Resource focus</b>	Optimize based on cost	Multifaceted and uncertain threats	Military judgement (focus on inputs)	Adequate and affordable mix of capabilities
<b>Mission focus</b>	Accomplish required military objectives	Generic military missions	Military judgement (focus on outputs)	Size force to carry out missions

**Figure 1. Force Planning in the Cold War.**

Threat-based planning was the principal method employed to size U.S. forces during the Cold War. With the acceptance by the National Security Council of NSC 68 on April 7, 1950, the Soviet threat was clearly recognized. In the words of Secretary of State Acheson, the Soviet Union confronted the United States with a "threat [which] combined the ideology of communist doctrine and the power of the Russian state into an aggressive expansionist drive."<sup>5</sup> The first task for military planners was to develop a strategic nuclear deterrent, both to protect survival interests and to extend this deterrent to protect vital interests represented by regional alliances, the most important of which was NATO. Military planners also addressed the need for conventional forces. In accordance with the threat-based methodology, war in central Europe became the dominant scenario. NATO developed a series of force goals designed to counter a predetermined level of Soviet forces. In the Lisbon Agreement of February 1952, for instance, the NATO ministers set a 1954 goal of 9,000 aircraft and 90 divisions.<sup>6</sup> President Eisenhower, however, desired "security with solvency" and had as one of his administration's principal goals the cutting of the federal budget. To stabilize defense spending, the "New Look" defense program deemphasized conventional forces and stressed the deterrent and war-fighting potential of nuclear weapons. The risk associated with conventional force shortfalls was ameliorated by U.S. reliance on nuclear weapons. Limited war capabilities however, were not completely discounted. General Maxwell Taylor, while Army Chief of Staff, established the requirement for the Army to be able "to close a corps of three divisions in an overseas theater in 2 months," with the necessary logistical backup to fight those forces.<sup>7</sup> Force planning in the 1950s, although firmly grounded in threat-based analysis, also contained important elements based on resource- (Ike's

New Look) and mission-based capabilities analysis (Taylor's corps).

The Kennedy administration discarded the "New Look" and adopted the concept of "Flexible Response" as the foundation of its defense policy. At the center of "flexible response" theory was the assumption that deterring and fighting with nonnuclear forces would reduce the likelihood of nuclear escalation. Secretary of Defense McNamara argued that the United States needed a "two-and-one-half-war" conventional war capability sufficient to mount a defense of Western Europe against a Soviet attack; defend either Southeast Asia or Korea against a Chinese attack; and still meet a contingency elsewhere.<sup>8</sup> McNamara recognized the challenges of conducting defense planning under uncertainty, notably the need for defense programs to provide capabilities that would eventually be used in unforeseen contingencies. From this arose the concept of rationalizing force structure in terms of the most stressing threats (the Soviet Union and China), but training and equipping the forces for flexibility.<sup>9</sup> Army Chief of Staff General Wheeler claimed that "we have created versatile and flexible general purpose forces which can be tailored to the requirements of emergency situations. For these purposes, the relatively new United States Strike Command, STRICOM, has been provided eight combat-ready Army divisions, a commensurate amount of Tactical Air combat power, and the necessary airlift to cope with a number of limited war situations."<sup>10</sup> STRICOM's mission was to provide a general reserve of combat ready forces to reinforce other unified commands, and to plan and conduct contingency operations. McNamara used contingency planning to hedge against uncertainty and reasoned that if U.S. forces could cope with the most threatening contingencies, they should suffice to deal with the other

unexpected challenges that might arise.<sup>11</sup> Once again, force planners combined elements from threat- and capabilities-based planning.

A less conservative strategy was chosen by the Nixon, Ford, and Carter administrations. As National Security Adviser, Henry Kissinger launched a reexamination of the assumptions of the two-and-one-half war strategy. The collapse of the Sino-Soviet bloc and recognition that the United States had never generated the forces required for that strategy led to the adoption of the one-and-one-half war strategy. President Nixon outlined the rationale in his report to Congress in February 1970:

In the effort to harmonize doctrine and capability, we chose what is best described as the "1 1/2 war" strategy. Under it we will maintain in peacetime general purpose forces adequate for simultaneously meeting a major Communist attack in either Europe or Asia, . . . and contending with a contingency elsewhere.<sup>12</sup>

Within this more conservative framework, planning under uncertainty was always a theme. In 1976, Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger employed multiple planning scenarios in his guidance to the military departments, similar to the Illustrative Planning Scenarios of today. The *DoD Annual Report* 2 years later noted that U.S. general purpose forces "must be trained, equipped, and supplied so that they can deploy and fight in a wide variety of environments against a range of possible foes."<sup>13</sup>

Flexibility in force planning was advanced further during the Carter administration. The issue of regional contingencies was raised, with a particular focus on the Persian Gulf. A 1979 DoD study identified a variety of threats and contingencies, and proposed programs to provide broad capabilities for the region without focusing

on a single threat or scenario. This capabilities-based effort eventually led to the formation of the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force and, still later, CENTCOM. After the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979, however, military planners turned almost exclusively to the Soviet threat to Iran as the likely scenario for action in the Persian Gulf.<sup>14</sup>

During the Reagan years military planning was much more clearly grounded in a threat-based approach based on possible global war with the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union appeared to be capable of aggression in several theaters, and U.S. planning had to consider the possibility of simultaneous wars in Southwest Asia and Central Europe. The Office of the Secretary of Defense adopted a force sizing scenario that postulated a Soviet invasion of Iran as the initial event in such a global war. This scenario raised the possibility of war with the Soviet Union on several fronts, either because of Soviet aggression in multiple theaters or because the United States might escalate "horizontally" by conducting offensives in regions of Soviet weakness.<sup>15</sup> Despite this possibility of multifront operations, however, it was clear that the defense of central Europe was the dominant case for defining military requirements. Nevertheless, the rapid deployment force (RDF) made continued progress during the Reagan buildup. That the purpose and framework of this force were anchored in capabilities-based planning was illustrated in the 1984 *DoD Annual Report*:

... we need a "rapid deployment capability" primarily for those areas of the world in which the U.S. has little or no nearby military infrastructure or, in some cases, maintains no presence at all. There are many locations where we might need to project force, not only in SWA and the Middle East, but also in Africa, Central America, South America, the Caribbean, and elsewhere. Each of these areas has special requirements, but it

would be too costly to try to tailor a unique force for each. Therefore we must set priorities . . . and, at the same time, build flexible capabilities that can serve our needs in more than one region.<sup>16</sup>

Force planning during the Reagan years, and indeed for all administrations during the Cold War, was threat-based but not to the exclusion of important contributions derived from the capabilities-based approach. "Threat analysis was an important variable in the strategy development process," one Rand analyst concludes in this regard, "but it was far from the only factor, or even the most important."<sup>17</sup> During the entire period, Secretaries of Defense were consistently concerned with planning under uncertain conditions and thus made regional distinctions and considered contingencies other than the standard Soviet attack on Central Europe.<sup>18</sup> In addition, U.S. Cold War force structure was generally large and diverse enough to respond to numerous lesser-included contingencies.<sup>19</sup> In the end, the combination of force planning methods worked well for the United States in the Cold War. But, as Figure 2 demonstrates, it was the threat-based foundation that primarily contributed to the widespread political support for decades of high defense spending.

Cold-War Force Planning				
	Strategy	Scenario (focus)	Leading Methodology	Supporting Effort
<b>Eisenhower 1950s</b>	New Look (nuclear warfighting)	Strategic nuclear war with the Soviet Union	Capabilities-based (resource variant)	
<b>Kennedy Johnson 1960s</b>	Flexible Response (2 and ½ wars)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monolithic Communist threat</li> <li>• Central Europe against Soviet Union</li> <li>• Asia against China</li> <li>• Lesser contingency</li> </ul>	Threat-based	Specialized capabilities for intervention operations
<b>Nixon/Ford Carter 1970s</b>	1 and ½ wars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• War in Central Europe</li> <li>• Lesser contingency</li> </ul>	Threat-based	Rapid deployment capabilities (RDJTF)
<b>Reagan 1980s</b>	Horizontal escalation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global war with Soviet Union</li> <li>• Possibly triggered by Soviet invasion of Iran</li> </ul>	Threat-based	Continued development of rapid deployment capabilities

**Figure 2. Post-Cold War Force Planning.**



The basis for U.S. Cold War planning was dramatically swept away in only a few years as a result of two revolutions in the Soviet Union. The first occurred when President Gorbachev announced to the United Nations in December 1988 that he would withdraw some troops from Eastern Europe. This revolution ended in November 1989 when the Berlin Wall fell, signaling the end of the Warsaw Pact and the end of Moscow's domination of Eastern Europe. The second revolution began in August 1991, with the attempted coup in Moscow. The failed attempt by communist hard-liners to turn back the clock led to accelerated change and the demise of the Soviet Union.<sup>20</sup>

These revolutions changed the strategic environment in four critical areas. First, the Soviet collapse eliminated much of the stabilizing structure of the bipolar Cold War world. Stability was also lessened by the loss of the predictable and constraining emphasis on nuclear deterrence between the superpowers. Second, loss of stability imposed by the bipolar world accelerated the regionalization of conflict, a process that had been underway for some time.<sup>21</sup> "In a new era, some Third World conflicts may no longer take place against the backdrop of superpower competition. . . . The erosion of U.S.-Soviet bipolarity could permit, and in some ways encourage, the growth of these challenges."<sup>22</sup> Added to this are the unprecedented levels and quality of arms found in regional conflict areas, coupled with the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery means, all of which virtually ensure that U.S. global security interests will be threatened.<sup>23</sup> Finally, the demise of the Soviet Union engendered a public demand for a sizable peace dividend. As a consequence, pressure to reduce the defense budget has had a significant impact on force planning. An explicit objective of the defense program presented by the Clinton

administration is to meet American security needs while reducing the overall level of resources devoted to defense.<sup>24</sup> Political interest in eliminating the budget deficit by 2002 will continue to put pressure on the defense program.

### **The Base Force.**

In an effort to demonstrate military responsiveness to changes in the strategic and budgetary environments, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Colin Powell developed the Base Force in the early 1990s. This force was considered the minimum force that would still allow the armed forces to meet mission requirements with acceptable risk. The Base Force was developed through a close-hold process by the Program and Budget Analysis Division (PBAD) of the Force Structure, Resource, and Assessment Directorate (J-8) of the Joint Staff, with little analytical support, or formal input, from the Services or the CINCs. The suspension of the JSR process and the development of the Base Force are manifestations of the Goldwater-Nichols Act, and dramatically demonstrate the shifting focus of the force planning process from the Services to the Joint Staff.<sup>25</sup>

The Base Force straddled both the Soviet revolutions of 1988 and 1991, causing the justification and rationale behind the chosen force levels to evolve over time. The initial focus of the Base Force was on a capabilities-based approach to defense planning, driven largely by resource constraints. As a result, the J-5 was given the task of determining:

. . . whether J-8's resource-driven force structure and the Chairman's recommended force posture provided the capability to pursue US objectives. Thus he was to validate from a strategic perspective the force structure that the J-8 had already validated from a programming and budgetary perspective.<sup>26</sup>

The threat was very ill-defined at this point. "I'm running out of demons," General Powell commented in April 1991, "I'm running out of villains. . . . I'm down to Castro and Kim Il Sung."<sup>27</sup> In such an environment, Powell stressed, there were some very real limitations to threat-oriented contingency analysis. The resource-constrained force, he concluded, should instead focus on the combat capabilities needed to ensure that a sufficient array of assets would be present to perform the multiple missions demanded on the modern battlefield.<sup>28</sup> The mission-focused aspect of the Base Force was evident in the three conceptual conventional force packages that eventually became part of the 1992 National Military Strategy (NMS) (Figure 3). Forces for the Atlantic would include forward based and forward deployed units committed to Europe, and heavy reinforcing forces for Europe, the Middle East, and the Persian Gulf based in the United States. The Pacific Forces differed from the Atlantic package, reflecting the maritime character of the area. Contingency Forces would consist of U.S. based ground, air, and naval forces capable of worldwide deployment as needed.<sup>29</sup>

		ARMY	NAVY	USMC	USAF
ATLANTIC FORCES	Forward Deployed	2 DIV	1 CVBG		3 FWE
	CONUS	3 DIV 6 RC DIV	5 CVBG	1 MEF	2 FWE 11 RC FWE
PACIFIC FORCES	FWD Deployed	2 DIV	1 CVBG	1 MEF	3 FWE
	CONUS		5 CVBG		
CONTINGENCY FORCES	CONUS	5 DIV	Tailored Mix	1 MEF	7 FWE
TOTAL (AC):		12 DIVs	12 CVBGs	3 MEFs	15 FWEs
CVBG : Carrier Battle Group      MEF: Marine Expeditionary Force      FWE: Fighter Wing Equivalent					
Source: 1992 NMS					

**Figure 3. Base Force.**

Unfortunately, the demand of Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM precluded the Pentagon's strategic planners from completing the analytical construct behind the Base Force, a task that Representative Les Aspin was more than willing to undertake. In the first of two national security papers, Aspin attacked capabilities-based force planning, charging that decisions concerning what capabilities are required of U.S. forces could not be done in a vacuum. Instead, he concluded, "... it is critical to identify threats to U.S. interests that are sufficiently important that Americans would consider the use of force to secure them."<sup>30</sup> Shortly thereafter, Aspin outlined in a second paper, his concept of the "Iraqi equivalent" as the generic threat measure for regional aggressors and the "Desert Storm equivalent" as the most robust building block for U.S. forces. The purpose was to establish a clear linkage between the force structure and the sorts of threats the forces could be expected to deal with. Aspin also envisioned his "threat-driven" methodology to be flexible enough to include aspects of a typical capabilities-based approach. The building blocks for the methodology, he pointed out, were generic capabilities.

Although each is informed by a careful review of pertinent historical cases, I am not suggesting we acquire forces which would be suited only to a few places and precedents. I'm suggesting instead generic military capabilities which should be effective against the full spectrum of categorical threats in the uncertain future.<sup>31</sup>

At the same time, within the Pentagon, the rationale for the Base Force evolved into a combined capabilities-based and threat-based approach and became firmly anchored to the two MRC requirement. In late 1992, General Powell began promoting the Base Force as both capabilities oriented as well as threat oriented. In a few cases such as Korea and Southwest Asia, he pointed out, it was possible

to identify particular threats with some degree of certainty.<sup>32</sup> These developments had no effect on the regional focus of the force. In 1992, Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney reported that, "the ability to respond to regional and local crises is a key element of our new strategy."<sup>33</sup> And the "Base Force" NMS of 1992 stated that, U.S. "plans and resources are primarily focused on deterring and fighting regional rather than global wars."<sup>34</sup> Although neither of these documents specified a two MRC requirement, behind the scenes the sizing function for this requirement continued to evolve. Both the 1991 and 1992 Joint Military Net Assessments (JMNAs) focused on the warfighting analysis for Major Regional Contingency-East (MRC-East)-Southwest Asia, and MRC-West-Korea. According to Army force planners, the principal focus of U.S. operational planning was "regional crisis response—to include a capability to respond to multiple concurrent major regional contingencies."<sup>35</sup> In his autobiography, General Powell clearly states what his NMS did not: "The Base Force strategy called for armed forces capable of fighting two major regional conflicts 'nearly simultaneously'."<sup>36</sup>

### **The Bottom Up Review Force.**

With a new administration, the Base Force title was jettisoned; but the underpinnings of U.S. force structure remained largely intact. Upon assuming office, Secretary of Defense Les Aspin initiated a comprehensive review of the nation's defense strategy and force structure and published the *Report of the Bottom Up Review* (BUR) in October 1993. The methodology for the BUR combined all threat-based and capabilities-based aspects of the force planning methodologies. To begin with, there was the traditional assessment of threats and opportunities, the formulation of

a strategy to protect and advance U.S. interests, and the determination of the forces needed to implement the strategy. At the same time, there was the evaluation of military missions that included fighting MRCs; conducting smaller scale operations; maintaining overseas presence; and deterring attacks with weapons of mass destruction. The ultimate force sizing criterion was to "maintain sufficient military power to be able to win two major regional conflicts that occur nearly simultaneously." The planning and assessment for these MRCs were based on two illustrative scenarios viewed as representative yardsticks with which to assess in "gross terms the capabilities of U.S. forces."<sup>37</sup> From this perspective, the BUR continued the dual focus on both threat and capabilities that had evolved in the Base Force. "The Clinton defense policy," Richard L. Kugler points out,

represents continuity rather than a revolutionary departure, for the changes it makes are relatively small. . . . The chief difference lies in the new policy's call for a smaller conventional posture, but only 10-15 percent smaller than the Bush administration's Base Force.<sup>38</sup>

The BUR demonstrates that analysts who claim that force planning is either threat-based or capabilities-based probably do not have much practical experience with the task. It is clear that elements of both approaches must be applied. This is even more the case in periods of increased uncertainty, as demonstrated by the Base Force and the BUR. Scenarios are extremely useful to the force planner as a yardstick against which to measure the capabilities of one's force. Because they reflect key aspects of future challenges the United States might face, well-chosen scenarios help to ensure that the yardstick used has some relationship to reality. It is also important to keep in mind

that no single scenario (or pair of scenarios) will ever be completely adequate to assess force capabilities.

Does the use of scenarios as assessment tools constitute "threat-based planning"? That common question can best be answered by posing another: "Is it possible to do serious force planning without reference, either explicitly or implicitly, to some scenarios?" The answer to the second question is clearly no. Any force structure must ultimately be judged against some expected set of operational requirements—those things that the force is expected to be able to do. This is simply another way of saying "scenarios."<sup>39</sup> Nevertheless, just because scenarios are used, the label "scenario-based" planning should not be accepted. The central role played by objectives in planning (capabilities-based approach) has been clearly demonstrated. At every level—from the President's National Security Strategy down to an individual Service's assessment of priorities—the first step in planning is to state explicitly what is to be accomplished. In addition, any useful defense planning exercise must be completed within the context of the anticipated budgetary resources available for defense. The argument to integrate threat and the two types of capability-based planning is best made by Rand analyst Richard Kugler,

The central argument advanced here is that mission-based capability analysis can help gauge requirements for the U.S. conventional posture, and help build public understanding of why sizable forces are needed in an era when threats to U.S. interests are unclear. This is not to imply, however, that this methodology should entirely replace the other two approaches. Threat-based contingency analysis will still be needed to examine specific conflicts to which U.S. forces might be committed, and resource-based capability analysis will be needed to examine the internal characteristics of the force posture. The three methodologies thus are best used in tandem,

as a package of techniques that can work together to shed illuminating light on conventional force needs.<sup>40</sup>

## U.S. Defense Strategy.

The appropriateness of the two MRC force-sizing function can only be judged within the context of the nation's defense strategy. Fortunately, over the past several years there appears to be a growing consensus concerning the strategy's fundamental components outlined in Figure 4. The enduring goals of the nation, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, are clearly articulated, as they have consistently been throughout this period, as the objectives of the President's *National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement*. The ways to achieve these ends are succinctly encapsulated by Secretary of Defense Cohen, in the recently released QDR, as the "shape-respond-prepare" defense strategy.

Emerging National Security Consensus

<b>ENDS</b>		<b>WAYS</b>			<b>MEANS</b>
NSS	NSS TASKS TO THE MILITARY	DOD	QDR	NMS	
ENHANCED SECURITY	DETER/DEFEAT AGGRESSION	DEFEAT	RESPOND	FIGHT AND WIN	FORCE STRUCTURE READINESS MODERNIZATION INFRASTRUCTURE
	COUNTER WMD	DETER	SHAPE	DETER AND CONFLICT PREVENTION	
PROMOTE DEMOCRACY	OVERSEAS PRESENCE				
	PEACE OPERATIONS				
	OTHER TASKS	PREVENTIVE DEFENSE	SHAPE	PEACETIME ENGAGEMENT	
PROSPERITY AT HOME			PREPARE		

Figure 4. The Two MRC Requirement.



U.S. defense strategy for the near and long term must continue to shape the strategic environment to advance U.S. interests, maintain the capability to respond to the full spectrum of threats, and prepare now for the threats and dangers of tomorrow and beyond.<sup>41</sup>

Once again there is a great deal of consistency here in terms of basic components. However, as Cohen argues, priorities have been adjusted to place "greater emphasis on the continuing need to maintain continuous overseas presence in order to shape the international environment and to be better able to respond to a variety of smaller-scale contingencies and asymmetric threats."<sup>42</sup> Finally, the National Military Strategy suggests a continuing need for flexible and robust military capabilities. Despite the increased interest in shaping the security environment, the priority for U.S. military capabilities "... is to deter and, if necessary, to fight and win conflicts in which our most important interests are threatened."<sup>43</sup> The final element of our defense strategy, the means, is anything but settled and is the principal focus of the QDR and follow-on work by the NDP.

Contrary to much misperception, the United States does not have a "two MRC strategy." The U.S. defense strategy calls for military forces to be able to protect and advance U.S. interests by carrying out the full range of military tasks enumerated in the NSS. In addition to deterring and defeating hostile regional powers (fighting MRCs), U.S. forces are needed to provide stability via overseas presence, to deter and prevent the use of weapons of mass destruction, and to conduct a wide range of smaller scale contingency operations.<sup>44</sup>

The two MRC requirement represents the sizing function for the Clinton administration's defense program—

the principal determinant of the size and composition of U.S. conventional forces. The nature of this sizing function was clearly articulated by Secretary Perry in 1996:

Previously, our force structure was planned to deter a global war with the Soviet Union, which we considered a threat to our very survival as a nation. All other threats, including regional threats, were considered lesser-but-included cases . . . Today, the threat of global conflict is greatly diminished, but the danger of regional conflict is neither lesser nor included and has therefore required us to take this danger explicitly into account in structuring our forces.<sup>46</sup>

The specific two MRC requirement states that the principal determinant of the size and composition of U.S. conventional forces is "the capability, in concert with regional allies, to fight and decisively win two MRCs that occur nearly simultaneously."<sup>46</sup> Inherent in the acceptance of the two MRC force-sizing requirement is the recognition that the United States will not be able to conduct sizable contingency operations at the same time it is fighting in two MRCs.<sup>47</sup> The compelling rationale for this sizing function has been developed during the entire post-Cold War period.

First, as a nation with global interests, the United States wants to field a military capability to avoid a situation in which it lacks the forces to deter aggression in one region while fighting in another. "With this capability," the BUR points out, "we will be confident, and our allies as well as potential enemies will know, that a single regional conflict will not leave our interests and allies in other regions at risk."<sup>48</sup> The historical evidence in support of the two MRC requirement is much stronger than detractors are willing to acknowledge. There have been, for instance, 22 nearly simultaneous crises, requiring the deployment and use of military force from 1946 to 1991.<sup>49</sup> The likelihood of

such occurrences has increased in the absence of the Cold War superpower restraints.

A second reason is that a force capable of defeating two regional adversaries should provide the basic wherewithal to support a defense against a larger-than-expected threat from, as examples, a continental-scale adversary such as Russia or China, or a coalition of regional opponents.<sup>50</sup> Although a peer competitor is not envisioned in the near term, the possibility of confrontations with a larger than MRC threat must be guarded against, as demonstrated in the recent crisis over Taiwan. This hedge against uncertainty is also required as a practical matter because of the time needed to reconstitute a larger force. "If we were to discard half of this two MRC capability or allow it to decay," the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff concludes, "it would take many years to rebuild a force of comparable excellence. In today's turbulent international environment, where the future posture of so many powerful nations remains precarious, we could find ourselves with too little, too late."<sup>51</sup>

Finally, the two MRC sizing function recognizes the increased operational deployment of American forces and allows the United States to deter latent threats from regional adversaries when portions of the force are committed to important smaller scale operations.<sup>52</sup> Although U.S. participation in smaller scale contingency operations should not be viewed as a given, if the National Command Authorities (NCA) decide to commit U.S. forces to such operations, the strategy and force structure, as sized by the two MRC requirement, can adequately support that commitment.

Although there has been continuity throughout the 1990s concerning the use of the two MRC sizing function, the current defense program, for the first time, provides a great deal of specificity concerning that requirement. The first component is the two illustrative planning scenarios (IPS) developed to assist planning and assessment. Each scenario examines the performance of projected U.S. forces in relation to critical parameters, including warning time, threat, terrain, regional allies, and duration of hostilities.<sup>53</sup> These scenarios were not designed to replicate the operational plans of the warfighting CINCs, but rather to assess forces and support assets for a wide range of possible future operations.<sup>54</sup> In addition to the MRC scenarios, the defense program has also examined numerous smaller scale operations in order to identify any unique force requirements not specified in the two MRC warfight.

A second component is a notional operational scheme for the execution of an MRC. U.S. planning for fighting and winning MRCs envisions an operational strategy that in general unfolds as follows:

- halt the invasion
- build-up U.S. and allied combat power in theater while reducing the enemy's
- decisively defeat the enemy
- provide for post-war stability<sup>55</sup>

The chart at the Appendix graphically shows the phases for each MRC and indicates the planning aspects of simultaneity. The BUR assumes approximately a 45-day separation between the start of the first MRC and the start of the second MRC.<sup>56</sup>

The final component is the MRC building block. According to the 1996 *DOD Annual Report*, "the following

forces will be adequate, under most conditions, to successfully fight and win a single MRC," assuming continued progress on programmed force enhancements to strategic lift, prepositioning, and other force capabilities and their support assets:

- 5 Army divisions
- 4-5 Navy aircraft carrier battle groups
- Air Force fighter wing equivalents
- up to 100 bombers
- 1-2 Marine Expeditionary Forces
- Special Operations Forces<sup>57</sup>

### **Principal Criticisms and Alternatives.**

*Criticisms.* Several criticisms of the current defense strategy have been raised over the past 3 years: the two MRC strategy is unrealistic because of the low probability of occurrence; in the unlikely event the United States is confronted by two MRCs, the force structure is inadequate to the task; the methodology is flawed; the defense program is unaffordable—that it does not balance strategic requirements with available resources.

Those who challenge the existence of the two MRC requirement point to the absence of a two war experience even during the height of the Cold War. However, it is because the United States possessed adequate military capability that it has been able to deter multiple challenges. Sizing forces to meet only a single contingency provides would-be adversaries the opportunity to challenge American interests if that single MRC force is committed elsewhere. The deterrent value of a fully engaged single MRC force drops precipitously, and, while not necessarily inviting attack, it clearly passes the initiative into hands of

other hostile powers.<sup>58</sup> The United States has routinely deployed the flexible deterrent portion of the two MRC force in this decade. Moreover, since 1953 America has maintained at least the initial portion (deterrent portion) of an MRC force in Korea. In 1994, while in the process of reinforcing those forces in Korea in response to the North Korean nuclear weapons crisis, the United States sent the deterrent portion of the second MRC force to Kuwait to deter a recalcitrant Saddam Hussein. Since then, a similar deterrent package has been dispatched several times to Kuwait. In each case, the lack of a two MRC force might have entailed the sacrifice of U.S. personnel or the compromise of U.S. interests.<sup>59</sup>

There are also those that claim that two MRCs is the right requirement, but that American force structure is inadequate. "By claiming to be able to do what in fact it is unable to do," Harry Summers has noted, "the United States is not only bluffing—a most dangerous thing to do—but even worse, is kidding itself into a false sense of security."<sup>60</sup> Numerous studies and assessments by OSD and the JCS, however, to include the 1995 Nimble Dancer Exercises that specifically assessed the capability to fight and win two nearly simultaneous MRCs with the BUR force, concluded that the force structure and programs that constitute the BUR-based defense program remain sufficient to execute the two MRC requirement. The current *DoD Annual Report* claims that "U.S. forces fighting alongside their regional allies are capable of fighting and winning two nearly simultaneous major regional conflicts today." The report goes on to state that because of programmed enhancements and other key technological improvements, U.S. military forces will maintain and improve upon this capability.<sup>61</sup> However, even in the absence of adequate forces, seeking to achieve

the two MRC capability is central to credibly deterring opportunism. "Such a force is the *sine qua non* of a superpower," according to the QDR, "and is essential to the credibility of our overall national security strategy." Consequently, the two MRC requirement must be pursued in order to avoid undermining both deterrence and the credibility of U.S. security commitments.<sup>62</sup>

A final criticism is the claim that the BUR and its two MRC force create a fundamental mismatch since the budget is insufficient to fund the force adequately. The Congressional Budget Office in early 1995 estimated that the BUR was underfunded by about \$47 billion over the Future Years Defense Program (FYDP). The Clinton administration has since provided additional defense funding and argued that savings from base closures and acquisition reform will alleviate any remaining shortfall. Outsiders, however, still claim substantial shortfalls.<sup>63</sup> Given administration and congressional pledges to balance the federal budget by 2002, further budget relief will not be forthcoming. The Pentagon recently announced QDR guidance that assumes no upturn in defense funding over the next 5 years.<sup>64</sup> In addition to the near-term funding problem, Don Snider, in his defense "train wreck" thesis, argues that only 32 percent of the funding is for future war fighting capabilities and that this "investment deficit" will derail the defense train in the future. The large, expensive two MRC force precludes necessary investments for responding to future threats.<sup>65</sup>

### **Alternatives to the Two MRC Requirement.**

The alternatives can be grouped into two categories with two variants each. The first is the "lesser-included requirements" approach which has a capabilities-based

methodology branch, and a second branch that focuses on peace operations. The other category is the "technology" approach with a short-term focus branch—airpower enthusiasts—and a long-term focus branch—the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA).

*Lesser-included Requirements.* The lesser-included alternative consists of a theoretical branch and a practical branch, and is based on the recent experiences of the first decade of the post Cold-War world. During that time the operational commitment of U.S. armed forces has increased 300 percent, and the vast majority of those deployments have been at the low end of the spectrum of conflict—smaller-scale contingencies, not MRCs. The theoretical branch is a return to prominence of capabilities-based planning. Proponents for this approach cite evidence that for the past decade the United States has been responding to asymmetrical challenges—"non-traditional" or "unconventional combat" under strict rules of engagement and that the MRC designed force is not capable of efficiently and effectively executing these types of missions.

Strategists no longer need a sizing function upon which to base the size and structure of the military. They can now divorce themselves from the threat-based logic of the Cold-War and ask a more precise question: What set of capabilities must American military forces have to execute the full spectrum of requirements dictated by our national security strategy?<sup>66</sup>

There is, however, a false dichotomy here between threat-based and capabilities-based planning. Capabilities-based planning has not produced general agreement on a set of core competencies that should be granted priority in U.S. force structure and investment decisions.<sup>67</sup> In addition, the "lesser-included" alternative has a certain degree of faddish relevance, but it lacks a direct link to vital U.S. interests and thus is not a fundamental requirement



on which to base force structure. A two MRC force based on robust planning scenarios has the inherent flexibility to accomplish a wide range of missions, whereas anything less fails to provide the deterrent and warfighting posture needed to protect vital U.S. interests.

The initial attempt at applying a capabilities-based perspective is the Baseline Engagement Force (BEF), originally called the NOW Regional Contingency. This Joint Staff concept would group all ongoing contingency operations and overseas deployments into a new framework, designed to highlight missions, operations or deployments that siphon forces away from the two MRC requirement.<sup>68</sup> This concept may inform the debate about personnel tempo (PERSTEMPO) and operational tempo (OPTEMPO) and possibly capture a few unique requirements; however, given the independent decisions that justify each contingency operation on the basis of interest versus cost, the BEF does not appear to represent a reasonable rationale on which to base force requirements.

A more direct approach to the "lesser-included" alternative is taken by several senior leaders who, drawing on the same reference base of increased involvement in peace operations, have concluded that the two MRC requirement should be adjusted to specifically include force-sizing for peace operations. The Air Force Chief of Staff, for example, favors a new strategy with U.S. forces capable of winning one MRC and a conflict requiring half those capabilities, with enough left over to conduct two peacekeeping or humanitarian operations. The one half MRC capability in this strategy equates to airpower. Smaller-scale operations, General Fogleman concludes, ought to be equipped and focused on non-warfighting missions.<sup>69</sup> General George Joulwan, the former U.S.

CINCEUR, supports a similar approach. Claiming that six LRCs (lesser regional contingencies) are more demanding than two MRCs, and that LRCs represent a more likely use of military forces, he believes that the United States should be able to conduct a half-dozen LRCs at once.<sup>70</sup>

These approaches assume that U.S. participation in peace operations is a given. But U.S. policy is very specific on this issue. The NSS states that the "United States must make highly disciplined choices about when and under what circumstances to support or participate in" peace operations, and that the "primary mission of our Armed Forces is not peace operations; it is to deter and, if necessary, to fight and win conflicts in which our most important interests are threatened."<sup>71</sup> Elsewhere, the President has clearly articulated the priority for employment of U.S. forces: "If U.S. participation in a peace operation were to interfere with our basic military strategy, we would always place our vital interest uppermost."<sup>72</sup> Forces for LRCs are provided from the pool of forces designed to fight two MRCs; and operational experience in Somalia, Haiti, Rwanda, and Bosnia indicates that adequate force structure is available.<sup>73</sup> The risk of not being able to execute a 2nd MRC is greater than the risk of not executing the 5th, 6th, or maybe even the 1st LRC.

The "lesser-included" theorists are correct in noting the increased demand for lower-intensity operations such as peace operations and humanitarian assistance. The United States, however, is not the only recourse for such operations. U.N. peacekeeping requirements have increased by orders of magnitude since 1985. All told, 13 missions were begun between 1988 and 1992, equal to the number undertaken in the previous 40 years of the U.N.'s existence. The majority of these missions did not include direct U.S.

participation. To facilitate U.N. peacekeeping operations in the future, numerous initiatives are being pursued to create accessible military capabilities: these include a Dutch-sponsored Rapid Reaction Force; a Danish-led effort to establish a U.N. Standby High Readiness Brigade; and a Canadian-sponsored vanguard headquarters force. The United States is also heavily involved in sponsoring international peacekeeping forces. A prime example is the Africa Crisis Response Force (ACRF), an all-African 10,000 man military force to intervene in that continent's trouble spots. And the United States has recently provided airlift assistance to reinforce African peacekeepers in Liberia. Some of these multilateral reaction forces may be contentious and not result in deployable capabilities; however, the point remains that U.S. military forces do not represent the only capability to respond to future "asymmetrical" challenges.<sup>74</sup>

Finally, if the National Command Authorities (NCA) decide to commit U.S. forces to a peace operation, the strategy and force structure, as sized by the two MRC requirement, can adequately support that commitment. There is no need to focus units specifically on these types of operations. U.S. participation in Bosnia provides an ideal case study from which to examine this claim. The first point is to review the strategy and associated operational considerations. Participation in the Implementation Force (IFOR) and the Stabilization Force (SFOR) does not seriously reduce the ability of U.S. forces to fight and win an MRC elsewhere; however, there could be delays in force closure and conflict termination. The first priority is the most critical phase in fighting and winning an MRC: the rapid deployment of forces to supplement indigenous and forward deployed U.S. forces to halt the enemy invasion during the opening days of the conflict. In general, combat

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forces that might be engaged in peace operations would not be among those sent during this critical opening phase in an MRC. The combat elements involved in Bosnia come from divisions other than those designated a part of the contingency force. Therefore, combat forces most needed in the opening phase of a regional conflict would almost certainly still be available to deploy on short notice from their home stations.

From the outset, the current strategy recognizes that U.S. military forces would not be able to conduct sizable peace operations at the same time they are fighting in two MRCs. Committed forces would have to disengage and, if necessary, retrain so they could be employed in higher priority operations in another theater. As a consequence, were an MRC to occur, the NCA would have to decide what steps to take to make forces available for possible deployment to a second theater. Options include discontinuing participation by U.S. forces in Bosnia, relying on a smaller building block of forces to deter aggression in regions where we are concerned that a second MRC might occur, and, possibly, backfilling active duty U.S. forces engaged in peace operations with reserves.

There has also been a great deal of concern expressed about so-called "high-demand, low-density" (HD-LD) units that have experienced very high OPTEMPO because of frequent deployments. These include Army military police, engineers, Patriot crewman, civil affairs, and port opening units, as well as Air Force airlift crews and ground handling units. This is one reason why a presidential callup of selected reserve forces is required to support peace operations such as Bosnia, Haiti, and even Rwanda. In addition to reserve component units, assets from allied countries, contractors, or the host nation can also meet HD-

LD requirements. Finally, to the extent that shortfalls exist that result in unacceptable OPTEMPOs, the Services can adjust the internal mix of their force structure. The Army examines this issue every 2 years as part of its Total Army Analysis (TAA). The full range of missions, from MRCs to LRCs to peace operations, are evaluated to determine what combat support and combat service support units are needed by the force. Based on this analysis, unit structure is shifted from less critical areas to other more important ones deemed inadequate. The most recent TAA (TAA-03) made adjustments to Active Component capabilities in the high demand areas of port opening units, transportation units, air defense units, and theater communications support.<sup>75</sup> The Army is also adjusting the force mix in its Reserve Components to ensure that critical support needs can be met. The principal initiative is known as the Army National Guard Redesign—a plan that would reorganize 11 National Guard combat brigades as combat support and combat service support units.<sup>76</sup> The Army has a great deal of flexibility within its one million total force end strength to organize units in accord with MRC and smaller scale operations requirements.

To the extent that U.S. forces can assist in peace operations, and if threats to more important interests remain in check, the risk assessment of such an operation would support U.S. participation. However, as multilateral capabilities improve, U.S. commitments will not be as necessary.

*“Technology” Alternative.* Proponents of technology argue that by leveraging the emerging technologies of long-range precision strike, or by waiting for even better technology-driven capabilities of the future, U.S. interests can be protected by a force posture much different from that

reflected in the BUR. Air power enthusiasts claim that the two MRC framework fails to take sufficient account of the revolution in airpower and precision strike technology. The alternative, as General Fogleman recommended, is to rely on a one-and-a-half MRC force, with the one-half force consisting of airpower effective enough to halt any would-be aggressor in a second contingency: two MRCs worth of airpower and one MRC of land power. An added advantage of this approach is that by focusing on capital intensive forces, the United States would reduce the requirement for manpower intensive ground units that are highly exposed to casualties.<sup>77</sup>

Closely related to the airpower enthusiasts are those who contend that the "revolution in military affairs" (RMA) will have profound effects on the way wars are fought. This model would replace the 2 MRC force with a "silicon-based" superior force that would be smaller and more flexible, emphasizing mobility, speed, and agility. Warfighters would benefit from technological achievements in stealth, precision weapons, surveillance, and dominant battlefield awareness. Most of the RMA crowd also contends that at present the United States has a threat deficit and therefore can afford to cut force structure and focus on research and development of new "sunrise systems," experimentation, and innovation.<sup>78</sup> Both variants of the technology alternative posit a smaller and unbalanced force structure to meet current and near-term requirements. But as Mackubin Owens notes, "To pursue exclusively the airpower or technology paths at the expense of a robust, balanced force structure is to invite strategic failure at some time in the future."<sup>79</sup>

## **Adjustments to the Two MRC Requirement.**

Force planning has been and always will be a very dynamic process. Consequently, as the strategic environment changes or as the understanding of its uncertainties matures, and as both threat and friendly military capabilities evolve, there should be adjustments to the defense program. Those adjustments, however, should only be made within the framework of the two MRC sizing function.

*Planning Scenarios.* The first adjustment is to reassess the planning scenarios used to size the two MRC force. Critics of the two MRC framework claim that the use of canonical scenarios (MRC-E and MRC-W) suppress uncertainty and do not satisfactorily measure the adequacy of U.S. force posture. Proposals include using an expanded scenario set, to include nonstandard scenarios, and examining the "scenario space" within that set of scenarios to determine capability envelopes.<sup>80</sup> Scenario space implies the iteration of numerous scenario characteristics, such as alternative force levels (threat and friendly), buildup rates, military strategies, and warning time, thereby generating a range of required capabilities. Nonetheless, the canonical scenarios—Korea and the Persian Gulf—are clearly the most stressful and dangerous near-term contingencies, and have served the United States well by creating a requirement for high-mobility forces and a diverse posture.<sup>81</sup> But if fine-tuning military capabilities requires a broader look, it may be appropriate to expand the scenario set and use a scenario space concept to examine all relevant factors. Adopting a scenario space concept should not be construed as abandoning the fundamental importance of MRC-based scenarios.

Reassessing the scenarios must also include reexamining the threats used in the planning scenarios. The Iraq and North Korean scenarios remain the most demanding, but in each case, threat capability is declining.<sup>82</sup> In addition, the potential for opponents' adopting asymmetrical strategies could pose different security challenges than those currently contained in the MRC planning scenarios. Iran's purchase of Kilo-class submarines and its improved antiship missiles is one example. Finally, although the near-term transformation of either Russia or China into "peer competitors" appears even less likely today than it did only a few years ago, planning scenarios should not ignore the potential power of China.

These factors highlight the dynamic nature and the importance of continuing to reassess potential threats to U.S. interests. Adopting the scenario space concept should account for dynamic threat assessments. Nevertheless, the United States should not lose sight of the importance of maintaining robust and balanced forces as well as the dangers and inefficiencies associated with cyclical downsizing and rebuilding in response to dynamic threat assessments.

*Operational Concept.* A second adjustment involves the need to reexamine the operational concept for fighting two nearly simultaneous MRCs. The real intent of a two MRC force is not fighting two major wars at once, but maintaining the ability to deter and defend elsewhere, once one MRC force has been deployed.<sup>83</sup> Operation VIGILANT WARRIOR, the American response to threatening moves by Iraq in October 1994, demonstrated the importance of focusing on "halt-phase," or deterrent forces.<sup>84</sup> If forces can be designed and postured more appropriately in areas involving key national interests, the United States may be



able to protect those interests and reassure allies more effectively. The optimum posture involves not just forces but also patterns of deployment, readiness, and operations.<sup>85</sup> An example of this approach is U.S. Central Command's current reassessment of the mix of forces forward deployed in the region to determine if a better formulation would improve deterrence.

Focusing on rapidly deploying, or forward stationing, "halt-phase" forces may be an effective alternative if a full-blown two MRC force becomes unaffordable. The recently released QDR emphasizes the criticality of maintaining halt force capability to seize the initiative in both theaters, and the Army Chief of Staff argues that "success in future crises or conflicts will be based on the ability to achieve strategic preemption."<sup>86</sup> As U.S. warfighting capabilities have improved since the Gulf War, U.S. war planners are placing far more emphasis on achieving decisive results during the halt phase. The U.S. military response during the halt phase is no longer simply focused on stopping the enemy, but includes a campaign of aggressive engagement that would degrade enemy capabilities at the start of an attack and reduce the requirement for U.S. forces during the build-up phase. Early decisive engagement requires the United States to emphasize offensive air and missile strikes, forward presence, and rapidly deployable offensive strike forces.<sup>87</sup>

Furthermore, it is not clear why forces designed for totally different regional scenarios have identical operating (above-the-line) force requirements as expressed in the basic MRC building block.<sup>88</sup> A two MRC force could consist of different building blocks, for instance, one designed to reinforce a substantial allied force presence, and the other

designed as a unilateral U.S. response in a more austere theater.

Operational innovations can also be considered for routine overseas presence deployments. For example, carrier battle group (CVBG) deployments can be reduced by relying on the Air Expeditionary Force (AEF) deployments and by recognizing the presence value of Amphibious Ready Groups (ARG). Although originally constituted to respond to carrier gaps in the Persian Gulf, a routine application of the AEF concept could result in fewer carrier requirements.<sup>89</sup> Finally, in addition to the 12 fleet carriers, the Navy has 12 large deck, VSTOL-capable, amphibious assault ships that support routine ARG deployments and are as large as any other navy's aircraft carriers. The CVBG's traditional forward presence mission can be adequately covered by a combination of CVBGs, AEFs, and ARGs, allowing for resource savings.<sup>90</sup>

The nearly simultaneous characteristic of the two MRC framework should also be reviewed as part of the operational concept adjustment. This would include a reexamination of the "win-hold-win" option. There was nothing wrong, Richard Betts argues,

"with the 'win-hold-win' option. . . . The notion that fighting a holding action in one theater until victory in another releases forces for a counteroffensive is equivalent to defeat was simply ridiculous. To plan sequential rather than simultaneous campaigns accords with the hallowed principle of economy of force."<sup>91</sup>

Therefore, rather than focus on two nearly simultaneous "win" forces, the United States should identify multiple "halt-and-prevent" forces capable of quickly compelling an offensive force to halt its attack short of reaching critical theater objectives.<sup>92</sup>

Nevertheless, any reexamination of this issue must recognize that the two MRC force posture has now gained an important level of political significance with U.S. allies and coalition partners. An extended "hold" for the second MRC may cause allies to wonder who will be left to fend for themselves while waiting for delayed American reinforcements. Such a situation could result not only in lost U.S. global influence, but in Allied efforts to "renationalize" defense programs, leading to regional arms races, and potentially the increased proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.<sup>93</sup> Both outcomes are undesirable and counter-productive to U.S. interests. Consequently, adjusting the "simultaneity" of the two MRCs should only be done with great caution and within the context of a strong deter and halt force for the second MRC.

*Affordability.* Secretary of Defense William Cohen repeatedly indicated that the Quadrennial Defense Review must be strategy-driven. The current National Security Strategy points to the continued utility of a two MRC force sizing function to generate the required capabilities to shape the environment and reassure friends, and deter and defeat potential aggressors. At the same time, Secretary Cohen has also stressed the importance of developing an adequate defense program that lives within a constrained budgetary environment.<sup>94</sup> There are numerous initiatives that can be pursued to ensure the affordability of a two MRC force.

*Force Thinning.* One concept that could generate considerable savings is called force thinning. The number of Army divisions, and Air Force squadrons, for example, could remain the same, but combat systems and the personnel manning those systems, particularly the number of troops and civilians in support and administrative

functions, could be cut. Force-thinning reductions are possible, in part, because of the coming revolution in military affairs (RMA), in which smart weapons, increased lethality, and situational awareness will allow for fewer platforms and fewer personnel. Responding to the Army's digitization efforts, for example, the Assistant Vice Chief of Staff of the Army recently pointed out that the Army may be able to reduce the manpower requirements of its 10 maneuver divisions and rely more on quality rather than quantity.<sup>95</sup> The digitization effort should also allow the Army to modernize its cumbersome logistics and supply systems and move to a smaller "transportation-based" logistics system.<sup>96</sup> The other services are equally sanguine. "It makes sense to me," the Air Force Chief of Staff recently concluded, "if there is greatly increased capability that we ought to be able to get by with fewer of them [aircraft]."<sup>97</sup> In this regard, the GAO estimates that by the beginning of the next century, the Air Force and Navy will require about 26 percent fewer flights to successfully hit their targets because of increased munition accuracy. Therefore, the number of indirect-fire and deep attack weapons systems required to provide a given level of effectiveness can be greatly reduced.<sup>98</sup>

Force-thinning efficiencies can also be gained by redesigning and reducing the military's support structure. The Defense Science Board estimated last summer that \$30 billion a year could be saved by cutting excess infrastructure.<sup>99</sup> U.S. military forces can pack much greater potential into a smaller force package with a smaller logistics tail.

*Modernization.* Regarding modernization, BUR resource levels have been criticized for underfunding the procurement of new weapon systems. The JCS Chairman

and the service chiefs have been urging DOD to spend \$60 billion per year on procurement. The "modernization squeeze" argument, however, fails to recognize the importance and adequacy of R&D funding, and is based on a false target driven by a dangerously out-of-balance modernization program. According to Secretary Cohen, the Pentagon's goal of spending \$60 billion a year on procurement is not sacrosanct and could change as a result of the QDR, which may find that a smaller figure is sufficient for weapons modernization.<sup>100</sup>

It is important to note that within the current defense program those activities related to the emerging RMA are funded and supported. All the Services are very active in experimentation and innovation, as demonstrated by the EXFOR division in the Army and the formation of Battle Labs in all services. In addition, R&D spending has not experienced the dramatic decreases that have affected procurement accounts.<sup>101</sup> In short, the future military capability of the United States is not in as great a peril as some pundits have predicted. Nevertheless, the government must make some hard trade-off decisions.

To begin with, the current modernization program is heavily skewed toward a few high-cost, high-tech aircraft systems having greatest utility in high intensity conflicts, while at the same time the program underfunds capabilities important for dominance across the entire spectrum of conflict. As important as airpower is to U.S. military effectiveness, its real value is based on the synergistic application of all elements of military power. In an MRC environment, for instance, landpower is needed to reassure and reinforce allies; to conduct a defense stout enough to compel opponents to mass and offer inviting targets for U.S. precision strike assets; to conduct

counteroffensive operations to achieve theater end-state conditions; and to accomplish post hostilities operations. In addition, regional powers will be inclined to adopt asymmetrical counters to the American style of warfare. Some of these could include nonlinear battlefield tactics designed to intermingle forces in order to make U.S. targeting much more difficult, or fighting in urban areas where the United States would have to limit its use of precision weapons.<sup>102</sup>

Single-focused technology solutions to modernization are also subject to catastrophic failure on the battlefield if the opponent has developed effective countermeasures. Concerning the new air and missile delivered "silver-bullet," the sensor fuzed weapon (SFW), a defense industry analyst recently claimed that these weapons could be rendered useless by very low-tech, low-cost jammers capable of defeating both the munition's GPS and weapon control data links.<sup>103</sup> Therefore, as in the past, U.S. force modernization efforts should maintain a balanced force posture to guard against focused and asymmetrical defense strategies and the emergence of niche capabilities that could thwart U.S. precision engagement effectiveness.

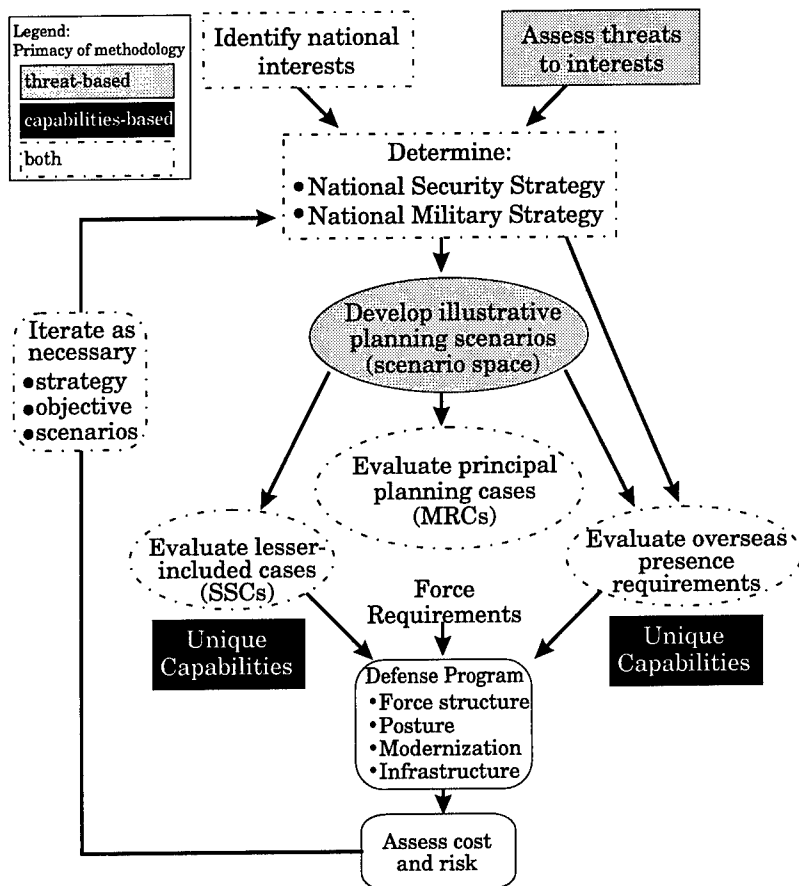
## **Conclusion.**

Force planning, particularly when it is done correctly, represents the purest application of the strategic art—calculating a variable mix of ends, ways, and means. In a world characterized by uncertainty and regional instability, in which the United States has security interests that are truly global in scope, the ends are fairly clear although difficult to achieve. The ways and means to achieve those strategic ends continue to be expressed appropriately by the two MRC framework. That framework

is founded on a logical integration of threat- and capabilities-based planning and is flexible enough to accommodate appropriate adjustments. New approaches to planning scenarios and the operational concept offer the potential for such adjustment concerning the "ways" of the strategic paradigm, while force thinning and modernization are two important categories for adjusting the affordability of the strategic "means."

The experience of more than 40 years of force planning indicates that elements of both threat-based and capabilities-based planning must be applied. This is even more the case in periods of increased uncertainty, as demonstrated by the Base Force and the BUR. Figure 5 summarizes the force planning process and illustrates the integration of threat-based and capabilities-based planning.

Drawing on the logic of threat-based planning, the force planner needs realistic scenarios as a yardstick against which to measure the capabilities of a force. Adjusting the existing canonical-MRC scenarios by adopting a scenario-space approach can better ensure that all relative factors and resultant requirements are considered. As shown in the center of Figure 5, the focus of force planning should remain on the evaluation of the MRC planning cases. The vast majority of force requirements are derived from these primary cases. However, it is also necessary to examine the full range of missions directed by the National Security Strategy, such as smaller scale contingencies (SSCs) and overseas presence missions in order to ensure that all unique force elements have been identified. Most of the U.S. forces forward deployed constitute a deterrent posture safeguarding areas of vital interest. Thus, in those areas, these forces represent the initial crisis response portion of



**Figure 5. Force Planning.**

the MRC force. Likewise, most of the force structure elements required to execute and sustain SSCs are derived from the two MRC force. Nevertheless, in both cases there may be unique requirements or higher demands for certain assets not otherwise identified. Finally, resource constraints must be applied to examine the internal characteristics of the force posture and to build an affordable defense program.



The two MRC framework provides the correct planning focus to size and structure military forces capable of accomplishing the full range of military missions directed by the National Security Strategy in this period of uncertainty and instability. The resultant force is large and capable enough both to deter regional opponents and win if so required, particularly if appropriate adjustments are made in the ways and means of the strategic framework. Moreover, an outgrowth of the balanced two MRC force posture is its inherent flexibility to respond to the full range of smaller scale contingencies. Such a force posture allows the synergistic application of military power and prevents would be aggressors from gaining any low-tech, low-cost advantages.

In the end, it is the combination of threat and capability-based planning in the two MRC force sizing framework that will allow the United States to achieve its strategic objectives as currently stated. The proposed adjustments will make the process more efficient and build a force that can meet diverse future contingencies, while remaining affordable. Commenting on the QDR, former Secretary of Defense William Perry noted that in order to reassure our friends and allies and protect vital interests, the "two major regional conflicts is an existential fact."<sup>104</sup> Military and political leaders in the United States must decide "how much is enough," and for the time being, sizing forces to be capable of fighting and winning two MRCs is the prudent and proper choice.

## ENDNOTES

1. The MRC concept, as first defined in the Bush administration, referred to major regional contingencies. The BUR adjusted the term to major regional conflicts. The 1996 National Security Strategy uses both phrases with slightly greater emphasis on contingency vs. conflict. The

QDR replaced MRC with MTW—major theater war. Only time will tell which phrase will endure. This paper will stay with MRC and the reader can choose to view that as either major regional conflict or contingency.

2. Harlan Ullman, *In Irons: U.S. Military Might in the New Century*, Washington, DC: National Defense University, 1995, p. 111, identifies three related “vital” questions for force planners: “What forces are needed strategically and operationally?; What level of capability and what types of force structure are politically and economically sustainable and justifiable . . . ?; and How do we safely, sensibly, and affordably get from today’s force structure and capability to that of tomorrow and properly balance the threat strategy, force structure, budget, and infrastructure relationships?”

3. The Rand Corporation happens to be the principal repository for detailed exposition on force planning methodologies. Among the most recent works on this subject, refer to the following: James A. Winnefeld, *The Post-Cold War Force-Sizing Debate: Paradigms, Metaphors, and Disconnects*, Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1992; Richard L. Kugler, *U.S. Military Strategy and Force Posture for the 21st Century: Capabilities and Requirements*, Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1994; and Paul K. Davis, ed., *New Challenges for Defense Planning: Rethinking How Much is Enough*, Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1994. In this last work, refer particularly to “Part Two: Principles for Defense Planning,” pp. 15-132.

4. Winnefeld, p. 8.

5. Quoted in Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy*, New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1973, p. 380.

6. Millet and Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America*, New York: The Free Press, 1984, p. 496.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 511-512. See also, Kaufmann, *Planning Conventional Forces 1950-80*, Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1982, p. 3. This requirement is very similar to the Army’s Strategic Mobility Plan, first announced in 1991 as the Army’s goal for the Mobility Requirements Study.

8. *For the Common Defense*, pp. 530-535; and Henry Kissinger, *White House Years*, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1979. p. 220.

9. Paul K. Davis, "Planning Under Uncertainty Then and Now: Paradigms Lost and Paradigms Emerging," in Paul Davis, ed., *New Challenges for Defense Planning: Rethinking How Much is Enough*, Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1994, pp. 16-18. Also refer to Paul Davis and Lou Finch, *Defense Planning for the Post-Cold War Era*, Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1993, pp. 157-160, for a review of this period. The referenced portion of the Defense Planning Guidance (DPG) for conventional forces employed in contingency operations reads like it comes from the last two national military strategy documents.

10. Andrew F. Krepinevich, Jr., *The Army and Vietnam*, Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press, 1986, p. 117.

11. William Kaufmann, *Assessing the Base Force: How Much is too Much?*, Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1992, p. 29.

12. Kissinger, p. 222.

13. *DOD Annual Report 1976*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976, p. 114.

14. Kaufmann, *Planning Conventional Forces*, pp. 26-27. Defense planning for Southwest Asia illustrates how interconnected threat- and capabilities-based planning are. Various threats to a vital national interest (free flow of oil) are recognized, and the United States decides to develop capabilities to protect that interest. Some analysts consider this to be a prime example of capabilities-based planning. However, those capabilities are specifically sized and postured against a range of fairly precise threatening capabilities. Because it is a range of threats (somewhat uncertain, but then again, most planners recognize that even very specific scenarios are not predictive), this is viewed as capabilities-based planning. This points out the very thin line between the two planning methodologies, particularly when it comes to actually building the force, in this case the RDJTF.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 27-28. See also Lorna S. Jaffe, *The Development of the Base Force 1989-1992*, Washington, DC: Joint History Office (OCJCS), July 1993, p. 4. For a discussion of multifront conflicts, refer to Harold Brown, *Thinking About National Security*, Boulder, CO: Westview

Press, 1983, pp. 178-182. Brown indicated that it would be advantageous for the Soviets to conduct diversionary operations in secondary theaters to complicate U.S. and Allied planning. Such operations would divert forces from the critical front—Central Europe. U.S. recognition of this problem resulted in a continuing focus on Europe.

16. *DoD Annual Report to Congress 1984*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, February 1, 1983, p. 191. This section of the report details the plans and issues related to the development of the RDF and CENTCOM. The planning force consisted of 4-2/3 division equivalents (Army and Marines) and 7 tactical fighter wings. The present day MRC building block has a longer history than most people realize.

17. Kugler, p. 19.

18. Davis, "Planning Under Uncertainty," pp. 28-29; and Davis and Finch, *Defense Planning for the Post-Cold War Era*, pp. 163-164. William Kaufmann offers a similar conclusion in his *Planning Conventional Forces 1950-80*, p. 24:

Do these difficulties mean that conventional force planning has been off on a wild goose chase for the last twenty years? . . . In fact, no one has yet devised a serious planning substitute for (a) the development and analysis of plausible but hypothetical campaigns in specific theaters, (b) for the determination of the forces needed to bring about the desired military outcomes in those specific theaters, and (c) difficult judgments about the number of contingencies for which U.S. conventional forces should be prepared.

19. According to William Kaufmann and John Steinbruner, *Decisions for Defense: Prospects for a New World Order*, Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1991, p. 6: "... most presidents, ... have been willing to bet that if the forces to cover the most threatening contingencies could be acquired and maintained at acceptable cost, they could divert enough of these forces to handle lesser cases without undue risk."

20. Les Aspin, "National Security in the 1990s: Defining a New Basis for U.S. Military Forces," speech given to the Atlantic Council, January 6, 1992, pp. 1-2.

21. See Geoffrey Kemp, "Regional Security, Arms Control, and the End of the Cold War," *The Washington Quarterly*, Autumn 1990, for a discussion of the implications of the shift away from a bipolar world and the dynamic factors contributing to greater risks from regional conflicts. The nature of regional threats is now widely established and accepted. Refer to the *National Security Strategy 1996*, *The National Military Strategy 1995*, and the *DOD Annual Report 1996*.

22. *National Security Strategy of the United States*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, March 1990, p. 6.

23. In the 1996 DOD Annual Report, Secretary Perry recognizes that these regional conflicts do not directly threaten the survival of the United States, but do threaten our allies and our vital interests. William J. Perry, *Annual Report to the President and the Congress*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, March 1996, p. vii. Hereafter referred to as the *DOD Annual Report 96*.

24. National Defense University, *Strategic Assessment 1996*, Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1996, p. 8. One of the goals of our National Security Strategy is to promote prosperity at home, or as the President indicates in his preface "to bolster America's economic revitalization." *A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, February 1996, p. 1. (Hereafter referred to as *NSS 96*.) Les Aspin, *Report on the Bottom-Up Review*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, October 1993, p. 10. (Hereafter referred to as the *BUR*.) The President's DOD budget request for FY 1997 represented a 6 percent cut from the previous year, and the requested FY 1997 DOD budget authority was, in real terms, 40 percent below FY 1985, the peak year for inflation-adjusted budget authority since the Korean War. As a share of America's gross domestic product, DOD outlays are expected to fall to 3.2 percent in FY 1997, well below any time since before World War II. *DOD Annual Report 96*, 1996, pp. 251-256.

25. As mentioned in the text, this was a close-hold process, at least initially until the structure and critical decisions were in place. Only afterwards did the details of the deliberations leading to the Base Force become public. By far the single best source is Jaffe, *The Development of the Base Force: 1989-1992*.

26. Jaffe, p. 25. General Powell reveals in his autobiography, *My American Journey*, an interesting incident related to the budgetary implications of his desired force. Based on an interview he had given, *The Washington Post* reported on May 7, 1990, that "the nation's top military officer predicted a restructured military could lead to a 25 percent lower defense budget." Powell goes on to relate that at the time Secretary Cheney had publicly proposed cutting the Pentagon budget, but by only 2 percent a year over the next 6 years. Powell and Cheney's frank discussion closes out this story. Collin Powell, *My American Journey*, New York: Ballentine Books, 1995, pp. 441-442.

27. Quoted in Kaufmann, *Decisions for Defense*, p. 45.

28. Kugler, *U.S. Military Strategy and Force Posture*, p. 35.

29. *Report of the Secretary of Defense to the President and the Congress*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, January 1991, p. 4; and *National Military Strategy of the United States*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, January 1992, pp. 19-24 (hereafter referred to as the *NMS 92*).

30. Les Aspin, *National Security in the 1990s: Defining a New Basis for U.S. Military Forces*, before the Atlantic Council of the United States, January 6, 1992, pp. 5-6.

31. Les Aspin, *An Approach to Sizing American Conventional Forces For the Post-Soviet Era*, February 25, 1992.

32. Colin L. Powell, "U.S. Forces: Challenges Ahead," *Foreign Affairs*, Winter 1992/93, Vol. 71, No. 5, p. 41. See also Powell, *My American Journey*, p. 438.

33. Dick Cheney, *Annual Report to the President and the Congress*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, February 1992, p. 8.

34. *NMS 92*, p. 11.

35. "The Army Base Force - Not a Smaller Cold War Army," discussion paper from the Department of the Army's War Plans Division, dated February 1992. See also Kaufmann and Steinbruner, *Decisions for Defense*, p. 27. The authors make the following point:

How many contingencies might occur simultaneously, and in how many separate theaters the United States should be prepared to become engaged at any one time, was not made clear. However, the assumption appears to be that the Pentagon should have the capability to deal with at least two major regional contingencies . . .

36. Powell, *My American Journey*, p. 564.

37. BUR: methodology, p.4; missions, p. 13; force sizing, p. 7. No other administration has provided the degree of transparency in its force planning deliberations as represented by the BUR. The detailed wargaming analysis done by J-8 is not presented for obvious reasons in an unclassified publication. Nonetheless, contrast this with the history of the Base Force (Jaffe), which was not published until at least 2 years after the fact.

38. Richard Kugler, *Toward a Dangerous World*, Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1995, pp. 212-213. According to General Powell: "It took us 9 months to finish the BUR, and we ended up again with a defense based on the need to fight two regional wars, the Bush strategy, but with Clinton campaign cuts." *My American Journey*, p. 564.

39. David Ochmanek, "Planning Under Uncertainty: A User's Guide to the Post-Cold War World," Santa Monica, CA: Rand, unpublished paper, September 19, 1995, p. 15.

40. Kugler, *U.S. Military Strategy and Force Posture*, p. 185.

41. William S. Cohen, *Quadrennial Defense Review: The Secretary's Message*, Internet, <http://www.dtic.mil/defense/defenselink/topstory/qdr/msg.html>, May 19, 1997, p. 2. (Hereafter referred to as *QDR*.)

42. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

43. NSS 96, p. 23.

44. *DOD Annual Report 96*, p. 5. For a spirited defense of the *Bottom Up Review* and its associated defense program, refer to the response by Dr. Edward L. Warner, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy and Requirements, contained in U.S. General Accounting Office, *Bottom-Up Review: Analysis of Key DOD Assumptions*, Report no. 95-96, January 1995, pp. 46-65.

45. *DOD Annual Report 96*, pp. vii-viii.

46. *Ibid.*, p. 5. See also *NSS 96*, p. 4, and *NMS 95*, p. ii.

47. *DOD Annual Report 96*, p. 14.

48. *BUR*, p. 7. This point is also made in *NSS 96*, p. 14, and in the *DOD Annual Report 96*, p. 5. General Collin Powell's 1992 *NMS* presents the same rationale:

Our strategy also recognizes that when the United States is responding to one substantial regional crisis, potential aggressors in other areas may be tempted to take advantage of our preoccupation. Thus, we can not reduce forces to a level which would leave us or our allies vulnerable elsewhere.

49. Winnefeld, p. 18.

50. This point is made in both the *NSS 96*, p. 14, where it refers to the "two war" force, and in the *DOD Annual Report 96*, p. 5. The *BUR*, p. 19, refers to this argument as a hedge against an uncertain future:

. . . it is difficult to predict precisely what threats we will confront ten to twenty years from now. In this dynamic and unpredictable post-Cold War world, we must maintain the military capabilities that are flexible and sufficient to cope with unforeseen threats.

51. General John M. Shalikashvili, *CJCS Written Statement to Congress*, March 1996, p. 18.

52. Edward L. Warner, III, "The Coming Defense Train Wreck," *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 19, No. 1, Winter 1996, p. 121. Warner was responding to the criticism of the administration's defense program.

53. The "use of plausible, illustrative scenarios against postulated threat forces enables comparisons and analyses to determine the relative values of different forces and capabilities across a range of circumstances," *NMS 95*, p. 17. The illustrative planning scenarios depict aggression by a remilitarized Iraq against Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, and by North Korea against the Republic of Korea. Refer to the *BUR*, pp. 13-15, for a good discussion of the planning scenarios used to develop the *BUR* force. This discussion addresses most of the common



criticisms raised against using these particular scenarios. Robert Haffa, Jr., "A New Look at the Bottom-Up Review: Planning U.S. General Purpose Forces for a New Century," *Strategic Review*, Vol. 24, No. 1, Winter 1996, p. 24, argues that the "work contained in the BUR was very much an extension of the scenario-driven methodology that, for the most part, has guided the planning of U.S. conventional forces since the 1960s. . . ." He goes on to state that the "most dangerous near-term contingencies—Korea and the Gulf . . . are among the more stressful to plan against."

54. U.S. Government Accounting Office, *Bottom-Up Review: Analysis of Key DOD Assumptions*, January 1995, pp. 61-64, argued that the scenarios differed from current war planning assumptions of the CINCs. The DOD response pointed out the differences between illustrative planning/programming scenarios and CINC war plans. The major difference is that the CINCs are concerned with the present, and the illustrative planning scenarios focus on the future.

55. *DOD Annual Report 96*, p. 5. For a more in-depth discussion of the operational phases, refer to *BUR*, pp. 15-17.

56. From an unclassified DOD briefing entitled "U.S. Defense Strategy and the Bottom-Up Review," Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Strategy and Requirements, March 1995.

57. *DOD Annual Report 96*, p. 12. The report goes on to state that in the event of unforeseen circumstances, such as a failed initial defensive effort, more forces could be committed. These additional forces would come principally from the reserves. Also refer to the *BUR*, pp. 18-23. The *BUR* identified several specialized high-leverage units that might be "dual-tasked," that is, used in both MRCs, such as B-2s, F-117s, JSTARS, and other C<sup>4</sup>I assets. It is worth noting that the MRC building block has remained constant over the past 4 years, with the exception of Army divisions. The original building block specified 4-5 Army divisions. That has been adjusted to 5 Army divisions in the most recent *DOD Annual Report*. The MRC building block receives mixed coverage in the QDR. On the one hand, the report claims that "the forces and capabilities required to uphold this two-theater element of the strategy will differ from the Major Regional Conflict building blocks developed in the 1993 Bottom-Up Review." Later, however, concerning the requirements for major theater war, the report concludes that a "force of the size and structure close to the current force was necessary." The

QDR goes on to claim that a larger force is needed in response to enemy use of chemical weapons or shorter warning times. Finally, the recommended force structure is virtually the same as the BUR force. QDR, Section III, p. 9; Section IV, p. 7; and Section V, p. 3.

58. MG Edward B. Atkeson, (USA, Ret), "The Threat From Washington," *Army Magazine*, Vol. 46, No. 7, July 1996, p. 13.

59. The classic defense of this requirement was presented by Secretary Perry in a letter to the *New York Times* in February 1995. Perry concluded that "... deterrence worked because the United States had a ready force and was prepared to use [it] ... The United States strategy to maintain a force that can fight two nearly simultaneous major regional conflicts is designed to prevent just this type of adventurism." William J. Perry, "What Readiness to Fight Two Wars Means," *The New York Times*, February 16, 1995, p. A26. This argument has been repeated in the Secretary's 1996 *Annual Report* as well as the current *NSS*.

60. COL Harry G. Summers, Jr. (Ret.), *The New World Strategy: A Military Policy for America's Future* New York: Touchstone Book, 1995, p. 153. In addition, former Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney, when questioned about our capability to support the two MRC requirement, indicated that he supported the requirement but was concerned that we lacked the requisite logistics capabilities. "About Fighting and Winning Wars: An Interview with Dick Cheney," *Proceedings, U.S. Naval Institute*, May 1996, p. 32.

61. *DOD Annual Report 1997*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, April 1997, p. 6. See also, *DOD Annual Report 96*, p. 12. In addition to the Nimble Dancer Wargame, the other studies include the Mobility Requirements Study Bottom-Up Review Update (MRS BURU), which examined mobility forces, and the Intelligence Bottom-Up Review (IBUR).

62. QDR, Section III, p. 8.

63. Haffa, p. 23.

64. "Future Forces to be Built on Idea that Budgets Stay Level," *Army Times*, December 23, 1996, p. 3.

65. Snider, pp. 91-92.

66. James Dubik, "The New Logic: The US Needs Capability-Based, Not Threat-Based Military Forces," *Armed Forces Journal International*, Vol. 134, No. 6, January 1997, pp. 42-44. The CSA agrees that the Army "should instead focus on how we can become a capabilities-based force able to provide stability to the world's hot spots." General Reimer's main concern about the two MRC strategy is that it does not allow for contingency and peacekeeping operations in Haiti, Somalia and Bosnia. "Reimer: Two MRC Strategy Should be Retained but Refined," *Defense Daily*, January 17, 1997, p. 84.

67. Haffa, p. 22.

68. "U.S. Military Seeks to Dodge Force Cuts," *Defense News*, Vol. 11, No. 40, October 7-13, 1996, pp. 1, 34.

69. Quoted in "General Predicts High Priority for U.S. Peacekeeping," *Washington Times*, January 8, 1997, p. 4.

70. As quoted in "Are U.S. Forces Structured Right?," *Navy Times*, March 25, 1996, p. 27.

71. NSS 96, p. 23.

72. *A Time For Peace: Promoting Peace: The Policy of the United States*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, February 1995, p. 15. The new Secretary of Defense has also taken a hard line on curtailing U.S. participation in peace operations.

I believe we should not be the world's policeman. We have to be much more selective, much more restrained in utilizing our men and women and committing them to areas which are going to serve to drain what needs to be done as far as keeping our readiness up and also funding our modernization account.

Quoted in "Pentagon Chief Faces Critics in Arguing Military's Budget," *New York Times*, February 13, 1997, p. B10.

73. Proposals to create units designed to conduct what the Army calls "stability operations," such as peacekeeping, peace enforcement and disaster relief, have coincided with a significant increase in the number of noncombat missions the Army has been called on to conduct.

Army leaders, to include the CSA, are convinced that the present force structure can cope with the demands of stability operations without dedicating any units to concentrate on such missions exclusively. "The Army takes its performance [in Bosnia], and the performance in Mogadishu and other places as confirmation that our force structure is about right and that we can do full spectrum operations." "Flexibility Key to 'Stability Operations'," *Army Times*, August 12, 1996, p. 20.

74. "Clinton Administration Revamps Plans for Trouble-Shooting All-African Force," *The Washington Post*, February 9, 1997, p. 28; and "U.S. Planes Will Airlift African Peacekeepers," *Washington Times*, February 12, 1997, p. 8. See also "It's Time for a Standing UN Rapid Reaction Force," *International Herald Tribune*, January 22, 1997, p. 9; and William J. Durch, ed., *The Evolution of UN Peacekeeping*, London: Macmillan Press, 1994, p. 9.

75. "Army Leadership Reviews Options for Filing Shortfalls in Support Units," *Inside the Army*, October 6, 1995, p. 1.

76. "Reimer: National Guard Redesign," *Inside the Pentagon*, March 14, 1996, p. 1. The issue of excess reserve structure was raised in the Commission on Roles and Missions, *Directions for Defense: Report of the Commission on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, May 24, 1995, pp. 2-24 and 2-25.

77. Edward N. Luttwak, "A Post-Heroic Military Policy," *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 1996, Vol. 75, No. 4. Because of funding problems, air-power enthusiasts also recognize that the two MRC framework threatens the health of major tactical air modernization plans.

78. See Andrew F. Krepinevich, Jr., "Keeping Pace with the Military-Technological Revolution," *Science and Technology*, Summer 1994, pp. 23-29.

79. Mackubin T. Owens, "How to Think About the Quadrennial Defense Review," *Strategic Review*, Winter 1997, p. 6.

80. Davis, "Institutionalizing Planning for Adaptiveness," *New Challenges for Defense Planning*, pp. 81-84. See also Davis and Finch, *Defense Planning for the Post Cold-War Era*, pp. 43-52; Kugler, *Toward a Dangerous World*, p. 270; and Paul K. Davis, David Gompert and

Richard Kugler, *Adaptiveness in National Defense: The Basis of a New Framework*, Issue Paper, National Defense Research Institute, August 1996.

81. Kugler, *Toward a Dangerous World*, p. 258.

82. Anthony Cordesman, author of a recent study on Iraqi military capabilities, states that, "The Iraqi military is in an accelerating decline that has picked up since 1994." "Sanctions, Not Missiles, Sap Iraq," *Defense News*, Vol. 11, No. 36, September 9-15, 1996, p. 4. Concerning Korea, The *Washington Times* reports: "North Korea's military forces have suffered a steady decline in capability that has shifted the balance of power in favor of South Korea." "North Korea's Slide Ends Military Edge," *Washington Times*, December 13, 1996, p. 18. In addition refer to "Dim Prospects Seen for N. Korean Regime," *Washington Post*, August 10, 1996, p. A24; and "N. Korea Called Top U.S. Threat," *Washington Times*, February 6, 1997, p. 6.

83. Kugler, *Toward a More Dangerous World*, p. 271.

84. The NSS recognizes this issue when it cites U.S. performance in Operation VIGILANT WARRIOR:

... we must have forces that can deploy quickly and supplement U.S. forward-based and forward-deployed forces, along with regional allies, in halting an invasion and defeating the aggressor, just as we demonstrated by our rapid response in October 1994 when Iraq threatened aggression against Kuwait.

NSS 96, p. 14.

85. Davis, Gompert, and Kugler, p. 1.

86. *QDR*, Section III, p. 8. See also Colin Clark, "Cut DOD Agencies, Not Army Troops: Army Chief to Cohen," *Defense Week*, April 28, 1997, p. 8. In addition, according to Michael O'Hanlon,

Military planning should focus on reinforcing this desirable state of deterrence and, if necessary, waging combat operations

early in the course of a conflict, rather than planning to retake lost territory with larger forces later on.

*Defense Planing for the Late 1990s: Beyond the Dessert Storm Framework*, Washington, DC: The Brookings Institute, 1995, p. 30. In this monograph, O'Hanlon presents a well-reasoned argument for a force structure capable of executing one DESERT SHIELD and one DESERT STORM.

87. Anthony H. Cordesman, *U.S. Forces in the Middle East*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997, pp. 47-48.

88. Don M. Snider, "The Coming Defense Train Wreck . . .," *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 19, No. 1, Winter 1996, p. 94. As Richard Haffa states, "... it's not the canonical scenarios that take us down the wrong force planning path, it's planning to fight them in canonical ways."

89. "U.S. May Raise Presence in Gulf," *Defense News*, November 25-December 1, 1996, pp. 1, 20.

90. Michael O'Hanlon argues that operational patterns can be changed substantially and that crisis response and warfighting requirements can be met by a fleet of only eight carriers. O'Hanlon, p. 85.

91. Richard K. Betts, "... And What to Do About It," *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 19, No. 1, Winter 1996, pp. 104-105.

92. For a discussion of the potential characteristics of a "halt-and-prevent" force, see Zalmay Khalilzad and David Ochmanek, "Rethinking US Defense Planning," *Survival*, Vol. 39, No. 1, Spring 1997, pp. 61-62.

93. General Powell noted one disadvantage of adopting the win-hold-win approach:

Aspin floated the idea of a force premised on our fighting one major conflict and a holding action against any other enemy until we could finish the first fight. Our South Korean allies immediately asked if they were the ones who might be left "on hold." Aspin's trial balloon popped.

Powell, *My American Journey*, p. 564.

94. "Secy. Cohen sets the ground rules," *The Army Times*, March 17, 1997, p. 3. Fred Hiatt argues that the review has been strategy-based, not budget-based, "as long as you understand that no strategy was allowed into consideration if it cost more than about \$270 billion per year." Fred Hiatt, "Defense: If Only They'd Debate," *Washington Post*, May 13, 1997, p. 17.

95. "Reimer: Army Divisions More Lethal, Capable Than Five Years Ago," *Defense Daily*, March 5, 1997, p. 340. An example of improved capabilities in tactical air platforms is provided by McDonnell Douglas Helicopter Systems in their discussion of the D model Apache Longbow. Prototypes had 400 percent greater lethality; 720 percent higher survivability; greater situational awareness; and improved reliability, availability and maintainability. "AH-64D Longbow Apache," *Army*, Vol. 47, No.1, January 1997, p. 22.

96. Interview with General Reimer, *Jane's Defence Weekly*, February 19, 1997, p. 32.

97. As quoted in "Fogleman: New Technology May Allow Smaller Force Structure," *Defense Daily*, February 16, 1996, p. 243.

98. U.S. Government Accounting Office, *Combat Air Power: Reassessing Plans to Modernize Interdiction Capabilities Could Save Billions*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Accounting Office, December 1995, p. 8. For a recent example, a innovative concept called "Revolution in Strike Warfare" will allow a CVBG to generate as many as 800 sorties a day in the first 96 hours of a campaign; a boost from the traditional 250 sorties a day. "U.S. Navy Concept May Triple Sortie Capability," *Defense News*, January 20-26, 1997, p. 8. If the increased sortie generation from each carrier is combined with the increased lethality of each sortie, the United States ought to be able to reduce overall capacity. According to Rear Admiral Dennis McGinn, Director of Air Warfare, "It is not a question of how many sorties it takes to destroy a target, but how many targets each sortie can destroy." For a detailed discussion of the dramatic increase in airpower effectiveness when armed with smart anti-armor submunitions—the Sensor Fuzed Weapon—refer to Christopher Bowie, *et al.*, *The New Calculus: Analyzing Airpower's Changing Role in Joint Theater Campaigns*, Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1993.

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99. Charles Robb, "Be Ready for Two Desert Storms," *The Washington Post*, January 15, 1997, p. 19.

100. "Cohen Says \$60 Billion Procurement Goal May Shrink," *Defense Daily*, February 27, 1997, p. 303.

101. In current dollars, DOD R&D funding has been relatively consistent for the past decade and has only declined 5 percent over the past 3 years, compared to a 18 percent decrease for procurement. *DOD Annual Report 96*, p. B-1.

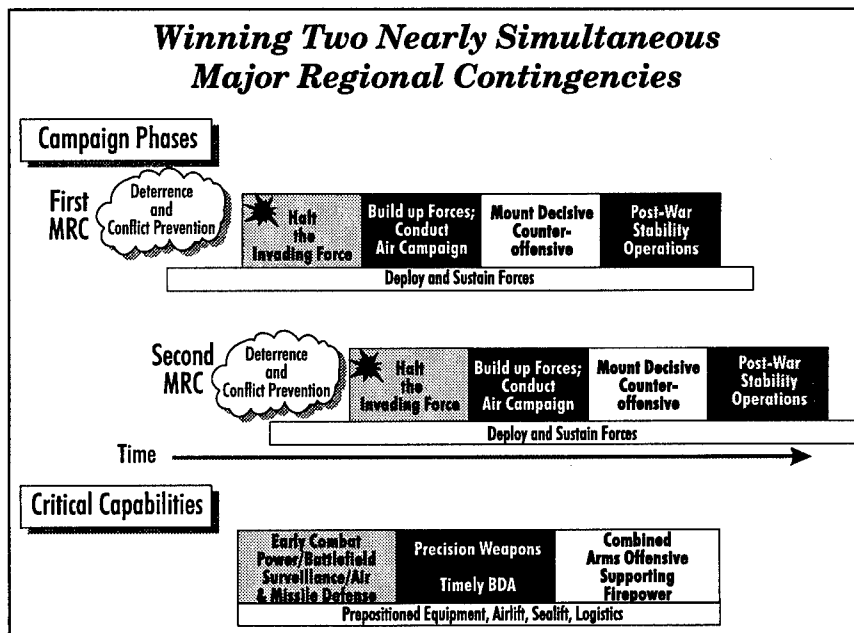
102. There is a body of work on lessons learned from DESERT STORM that addresses the possible asymmetrical responses of future opponents. The single best source is Patrick J. Garrity, *Why the Gulf War Still Matters: Foreign Perspectives on the War and the Future of International Security*, Los Alamos: Center for National Security Studies, Report No. 16, July 1993. In addition, refer to Bennett, Gardiner, and Fox, "Not Merely Planning for the Last War," in Davis, *New Challenges for Defense Planning*, pp. 477-514.

103. John G. Roos, "A Pair of Achilles' Heels: How Vulnerable to Jamming are US Precision-Strike Weapons?," *Armed Forces Journal International*, Vol. 132, No. 4, November 1994, pp. 21-23. Furthermore, the Israeli Defense Force expects that by the end of this decade tanks will be equipped with "smart" active countermeasure systems against both horizontal and vertical top attacks. Garrity, p. 61.

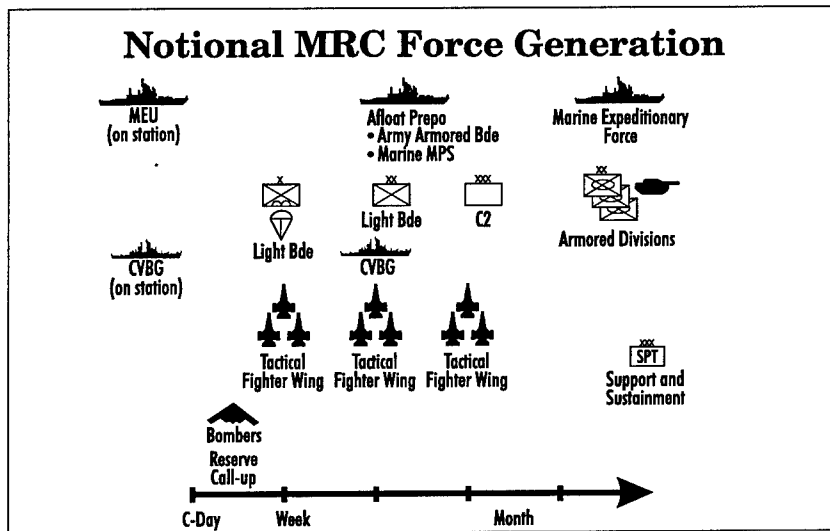
104. "Interview with Defense Secretary William J. Perry," *Army Times*, January 6, 1997, p. 18.



## APPENDIX



If a major regional conflict erupts, the United States will deploy a substantial number of forces to the theater to augment those already there in order to quickly defeat the aggressor. If it is prudent to do so, limited U.S. forces may remain engaged in a smaller-scale operation, such as a peacekeeping operation, while the MRC is ongoing; if not, U.S. forces will be withdrawn from contingency operations in order to help constitute sufficient forces to deter and, if necessary, fight and win a second MRC.



If a second MRC were to break out shortly after the first, U.S. forces would deploy rapidly to halt the invading force as quickly as possible. Selected high-leverage and mobile intelligence, command and control, and air capabilities, as well as amphibious forces, would be redeployed from the first MRC to the second as circumstances permitted. After winning both MRCs, U.S. forces would assume a more routine peacetime posture.

Source: *DoD Annual Report 1996*; and OASD briefing, "U.S. Defense Strategy and the BUR," March 1995.

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**Major General Robert H. Scales, Jr.  
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